

GOVERNANCE

SERVICE- LEARNING

&

*No Child
Left Behind Act of 2001*

TITLE I, Part H

School Dropout
Prevention

NON PROFIT ZINE LIFE DEFINITION

Service-learning provides thoughtfully organized experiences that integrate students' academic learning with service that meets actual community needs. Service and learning blend in ways that serve and enrich one another.

Service-learning is a method:

- 1** under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community;
- 2** that is integrated into students' academic curriculum and provides structured time for a student to think, talk, or write about what they did and saw during the actual service activity;
- 3** that provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities;
- 4** that enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community, thereby helping to foster the development of a sense of caring for others; and
- 5** that is supported by regular assessment to provide feedback and guide improvement.

How does Title I, Part H support service-learning?

Service-learning can be an effective means of meeting the goals of Title I, Part H, providing for school dropout prevention and reentry, and ensuring that children have substantial and ongoing opportunities to attain their highest academic potential. The Dropout Prevention Act supports service-learning in several ways:

Authorized Programs

Part H, Subpart 2,
Section 1822, (b)
(1)(H)

This section makes funding available on a competitive basis to local educational agencies (school districts) that operate schools serving students in Grades 6 through 12 and that have annual school dropout rates that are above the State average annual school dropout rate to implement “effective, sustainable, and coordinated school dropout prevention and reentry programs that involve activities such as counseling and mentoring for at risk students.” Schools can implement service-learning programs that include tutoring, peer counseling, cooperative learning, and other similar approaches to provide the counseling and mentoring that the law permits.

Community Based Organizations

Part H, Subpart 2,
Section 1827

This section stipulates that educational agencies at the local and state may use Title I, Part H funds to partner with community-based levels that “provide school dropout prevention and reentry activities related to schoolwide efforts.” Schools and community-based organizations can work together to provide meaningful service-learning activities for students who are at risk of dropping out of school.

By linking Title I, Part H and service-learning, students in schoolwide or targeted assistance programs will be introduced to concepts and experiences that have the potential to increase their sense of community. They will gain valuable experience to help them stay in school and prepare them for the workforce. To achieve these goals, service-learning programs must be designed with high-quality, ensuring that programs feature the components and strategies necessary for outcomes to be maximized. Providing data as evidence of effectiveness will be necessary to sustain the practice of service-learning using Title I, Part H funds.

LEGISLATION

EXAMPLES

Examples of service-learning models that could be adopted by Title I, Part H programs

Middle School Project

Folwell Middle School in Minneapolis, Minnesota developed the “First Opportunity” program to serve low-income youth who are at risk of dropping out of school and becoming involved in the juvenile justice system. The program is an early-intervention service-learning program for eleven- to fifteen-year-old youth that addresses the issues of truancy and delinquent behavior through a holistic approach that includes community service activities, mentoring, life skills development, and family case management services. The program also trains students to become peer mediators. Students developed a theatrical production to teach other students at the school about conflict resolution skills. A school wide family night brought community members together to discuss multicultural issues. Students assisted residents of a local nursing home and participated in a neighborhood beautification project as part of their service-learning activities. As a result of this program, students developed civic responsibility and leadership skills; addressed critical community needs through service-learning; participated in positive educational experiences; and received the support necessary to become self-sufficient adults.

High School Project

Malcolm Shabazz City High School in Madison, Wisconsin incorporates service-learning into all aspects of its curriculum for at risk youth. Students who participated in the “Stress Challenge” project worked on developing effective problem solving and communication skills, smart risk-taking behaviors, and respect for others. Students learned to trust each other by participating in cooperative learning activities and a ropes course. They reflected on connections between the activities and the curriculum through writing, discussion, drawing, and multimedia presentations. The high school students also served as role models for elementary school students. They shared what they learned and involved the younger children in cooperative activities and a visit to a climbing gym. The elementary students benefited by learning problem solving, communication and personal-choice skills. The high school students developed a greater sense of self-esteem; realized that their decisions not only affected themselves but also the others around them; learned how to deal with conflict in constructive ways; and became more open and willing to listen to others.

How do exemplary practices in Title I, Part H relate to service-learning?

Service-learning as a strategy for Title I, Part H service delivery shows enormous promise based on the research literature on school dropout prevention. The research literature indicates that children are less likely to drop out of school when:

- * Early interventions, such as pre-kindergarten instruction and reading and writing programs that target at-risk students, are in place;
- * Schools develop a learning environment that ensures quality education for all children;
- * Service-learning, mentoring and tutoring, after-school, and summer enrichment programs are available to connect youth with caring adults and community members;
- * The curriculum encourages students to find new and creative ways to solve problems, achieve success, and become lifelong learners;
- * Technology programs engage students in authentic learning, address multiple intelligences, and adapt to students' learning styles;
- * Violence prevention and conflict resolution programs provide a safe environment for learning and help students deal with conflict constructively;
- * Professional development provides teachers opportunities to learn about innovative strategies and techniques for working with at-risk youth;
- * Family involvement programs support students' learning and development at home;
- * Workforce readiness programs help youth develop specific skills for today's workplace; and
- * Community partnerships provide a supportive environment where youth can thrive and achieve.

Sources:

National Dropout Prevention Center/Network <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effstrat/effstrat.htm>.



I'm interested ... Now what?

A planning and implementation guide is available to help you as you explore your options. You may obtain a copy by calling or writing to:
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Confirm your eligibility

For more information on the Title I, Part H requirements and applications, check with your local district or state office of education. A service-learning project can be planned either as a schoolwide or targeted assistance program. More information can also be found on the U.S. Department of Education's Web site, available at: www.ed.gov.

Plan your service-learning project

- * Canvass the community to understand needs and willingness;
- * Develop agreements for student and community participation;
- * Explain how supervision will take place;
- * Provide information about liability and how problems will be handled;
- * Delineate the obligations of each party;
- * Develop an appropriate service-learning curriculum;
- * Design student materials and orientation processes;
- * Train those responsible for implementing the projects;
- * Connect service-learning to the curriculum through written and oral reflection opportunities; and
- * Conduct an evaluation to understand the program's effectiveness.

PLANNING